

The Hour

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BOAST OF McWILLIAMS' SUCCESS AMONG REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS

New York Fascist Chieftain Addresses Their Clubs in
New Jersey - Thinks He is Headed for High Places

The fascists of New York brag that certain groups within both major parties in the United States, Republican and Democrat, are lending an eager ear to the oratorical sallies of Joseph E. McWilliams, the führer of the Christian Mobilizers working in close collaboration with the Nazis and their Bund. Several weeks ago McWilliams addressed the Young Republican Club in Rutherford, New Jersey. On April 1 he is scheduled to speak to the Fourth Ward Democratic Club of Garfield, N.J.

We have already reported (see *The Hour* for February 24) that McWilliams first praised and then criticized his alleged friends in the Union League Club in New York City, a prominent organization of Republicans. He claimed that those friends "got cold feet" after the arrest of 17 Frontists on charges of plotting against the United States Government, and would no longer extend the help, which, he said, had formerly been forthcoming to him and the Front from that quarter. Those close to McWilliams indicate that he is now more optimistic about regaining certain of his old allies, that he -- in fact -- seems really cheerful on the subject.

However, such cheerfulness may well be a mask that McWilliams has donned for immediate strategic ends. It is definitely known to *The Hour* that a split is, and for several weeks has been, pending in Mobilizer ranks. Stories are rife of McWilliams being "tossed out," as the opposition gently phrases it. In fact, only recently McWilliams, in an apparent desire to relieve himself of certain responsibilities and no doubt at the same time to mitigate various accusations being hurled at him, offered the Mobilizer treasuryship to Joseph Hartery (the former procurer -- for Hartery's criminal record see *The Hour* for November 11, 1939). Hartery rejected the offer, saying he would not be the "fall guy."

Two possibilities present themselves: the first that McWilliams with big talk of "political assistance" is attempting to bolster the waning enthusiasm of certain of his followers. The second, that McWilliams is actually fed up with his present organization and associates and believes that, through his "new and influential" contacts, he is headed for very much higher places.

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CONGRESSMAN THORKELSON TELLS THE HOUR ABOUT "THE INTERNATIONAL JEW"

Also Discusses Threatening Letters and Libel Suits

WASHINGTON, March 28 (Special to The Hour) -- Dr. Jacob Thorkelson, Republican congressman from Montana, told your correspondent in the course of an interview in the Congressman's office here that he spoke at a New York City meeting of the Christian Mobilizers on March 4 because he wanted to draw personal attacks upon himself. He was disappointed over the reaction to this address, he continued, since the attacks he had anticipated had not materialized. "They're getting smart," he said. He explained that he is determined to force his attackers to prove any statement about him, which he considers derogatory, before a court of law. He has already filed at least two suits for libel, asserting to the interviewer that he is interested not in getting damages but only in forcing retractions.

Reflects Views of Christian Mobilizers

The barrel-chested physician-legislator, whose conversation is liberally sprinkled with strong language, gave this interviewer his curious interpretation of modern history since 1900, all of it hinged on "the international Jew" and "the Jew's attempts at world domination," and all of it reflecting most faithfully the philosophy of the Christian Mobilizers and other such groups.

Thorkelson also said that he has adopted his tactics of libel suits "in self-defense." He said that his opponents had gone out into Montana where they had begun a campaign against his re-election this fall, having succeeded as early as last November in getting the Republican State National Committeeman to issue a statement against him.

When asked about his recent mention on the floor of the House of his receiving intimidating letters and telephone calls, Dr. Thorkelson said he had been receiving them for a long time. He was unable to show any of the letters to the interviewer, explaining that he threw them away as soon as he saw what they were. Nor had he attempted, he said, to have any of the calls traced. Most of the letters and calls came from New York City, he said. However, he has turned over to the Federal Bureau of Investigation a letter that he received after he spoke to the Mobilizers, but said that he did not expect any results. He was vague about the nature of the intimidations, merely saying that he had not been threatened with assassination or bodily harm.

Thorkelson in Philadelphia Praises Coughlin

On March 20 Congressman Thorkelson delivered a speech in Philadelphia, addressing the Anti-Communism Society holding its meeting in the roof garden of the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel. In his speech he praised Father Coughlin and his work and attacked subversion "without regard for race, creed or color."

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CLAN ENLARGES HEADQUARTERS, RECALLS OLD MEMBERS

Drive of Expansion to Counteract Recent Reverses

The Hour is exclusively informed that, in order to counteract its recent reverses in the South and in New Jersey, the national leadership of the Ku Klux Klan is making a renewed bid for mass membership throughout the country. To further the recruiting drive, the Grand Wizard's Scribe (i.e. secretary) has taken out of their secret places of deposit all the old membership records for the period 1920-30. Persons on these lists are now being circularized anew by their district leaders in an effort to bring them into the ranks of the Klan. James A. Colescott, the Klan's Imperial Wizard, is boasting that the paid-up membership already nears the 500,000 mark, but informed observers doubt that the real figure runs that high. Nevertheless, it is a fact that Colescott's henchmen at the Klan's national headquarters in Atlanta were enthusiastic over the results of his recent recruiting and organizing tours in the North, Midwest, Florida, and other regions. New offices have been taken, and the Klan now occupies almost a whole floor of a large building in Atlanta for its national headquarters. A special factory was recently established by the Klan to make hoods and gowns for sale to new members.

Regards C.I.O. as Prime Enemy

The Klan's leaders profess not to be worried over the present investigation by the local and federal authorities of floggings and murder in Georgia (see The Hour for March 23). They defy their accusers to present witnesses fearless enough to testify against Klansmen, and so are convinced that the investigations "will blow over." They are, however, more concerned over the anti-Klan spirit increasing among the textile workers of the Carolinas, whom the night-riders have in vain tried to terrorize. The Klan has posted on many roads and walls anti-union signs reading: C.I.O. WILL NOT BE TOLERATED, KU KLUX KLAN RIDES AGAIN. The anti-Klan workers blotted out part of these signs to read: C.I.O. WILL NOT TOLERATE KU KLUX KLAN. This action on the part of the mill hands made the Klan a laughing stock in many localities.

In Detroit, the Klan is trying out a new method of fighting the C.I.O. and its United Automobile Workers' union: it attempts to penetrate and capture the union's locals. A recent issue of the Fiery Cross, the Klan's publication, boasted: "The Klan has completely taken over one C.I.O. local and is recruiting membership in many others with a view to ousting aliens and foreign agitators and placing the leadership in the hands of Americans."

Religious and Racial Hatred as Strong as Ever

In certain localities, the Klan's leaders try to allay suspicions of politicians and editors by telling them that the new Klan is dedicated to "Americanism only" and is not guilty of any racial or religious hatreds. However, recent Klan literature in our possession speaks of "White Protestant Americanism," a familiar phrase which was used in the old anti-Negro days of the Klan. Speaking of the Klan's latest "successes," these brochures and broadsides stress its loathing for "popism and Romanism." Burnings of crosses near synagogues in New Jersey and attacks upon Negroes

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in the South show that the Klan of 1939-40 is but an unchanged replica of its previous self. The most recent anti-Negro actions of the Klan have taken place also in the Midwest. In Detroit, on February 12-14, white gangsters attacked Negro students of the Northwestern High School in a three-day series of assaults, behind which the hand of the Klan soon became apparent. On March 10, in Ferndale near Detroit a Klan cross was burned by a group of plug-uglies in the presence of some 400 onlookers. The burning was a signal to a Negro worker to move out of a house he had bought in "a white neighborhood." So threatening was the attitude of the cross-burners that the Negro and his family had to move out under the protection of the police.

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GERMANS OF ST. LOUIS REFUSE TO RUN NAZI FILM

Nazi Consul Balked by the German House

A scheduled showing of the Nazi propaganda film, "The West Wall," was canceled by the action of the board of directors of the German House, 2345 Lafayette Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri, despite the pressure brought by Dr. Herbert Diel, Hitler's local consul. A memorial celebration to honor fallen soldiers was arranged to take place at the German House under the sponsorship of the German Veterans' Comradeship on the same program with the showing of the film, but this celebration was also called off. The House Committee recommended the exclusion of the film as outright propaganda, and the board of directors acted on the recommendation when it refused to rent a hall in the German House for the film and the memorial celebration. The showing of the film was to be sponsored by the Nazi consul, while the memorial celebration was patterned after the patriotic Nazi exercises carried out that day throughout the Reich (Heldenstag, or "Heroes' Day," in memory of the dead of World War I). The official connection between the arrangements in St. Louis and the program in the Reich was too clear, and the board of directors felt that many members of the German community in St. Louis did not want their House to be identified with the Nazis. In the past months German films were shown in the German House under Dr. Diel's official sponsorship, but they were regarded as harmless entertainment, whereas "The West Wall" is nothing but Nazi propaganda, the board ruled.

Distribution from New York's Yorkville

The Hour learns that a certain August Hambach of the Yorkville section in New York is among the most active distributors of Nazi films in this country. Among the films he rents out to Nazi and semi-Nazi organizations are frank propagandist ones on the Colonial Officials' School at Rensburg, Germany; on the glorification of compulsory labor in the Reich; on the Hitler Youth movement; on Hitler's "solution" of the woman problem; and various other motion pictures extolling Nazi "patriotism." German-American topics are represented by such films as "Pennsylvania -- German Journey."

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Through the Hourglass

BY MICHAEL SAYERS

COUGHLIN, REYNOLDS AND ALIEN-BAITING

The entire back page of a recent issue of Father Coughlin's magazine, Social Justice, was taken up with an eulogistic article on the character and accomplishments of United States Senator Robert Rice Reynolds of North Carolina. This article, slap on the picturesque back page of Coughlin's magazine, was quite an eyeful -- yet there was more to it than met the eye.

Robert Rice Reynolds of North Carolina is co-author of a bill which would establish a domestic passport system and stringent police surveillance for millions of law-abiding men and women in the United States. Reynolds' association with the Christian Front was exposed in The Hour (February 3). Yet it is surprising that Coughlin, who numbers many Irish-born among his followers, should devote so much space to praise of Reynolds, the alien-baiter.

With almost absurd fidelity our native fascist-minded demagogues are following the pattern laid down by Mussolini and Hitler. The Italian originator proved by demonstration that the first task of any fascist movement must be to find a scapegoat -- an unprotected, obscure minority, against which resentment can be directed, and by means of which attention can be distracted from genuine social problems. As has often been pointed out, Mussolini discovered the "Red Menace" in Italy long after the radical workers had ceased to be a real threat to Italian capitalism. Hitler revived the old German tradition of anti-Semitism as a camouflage for his assaults on German civil liberties and civil decencies.

In all cases the fascist aim is the same: to isolate a fake "menace"; to make it the object of all wrath, all hatred, all fear; and to advance it upon all occasions as the sole cause of any and every political and economic distress. Surely it is now about time that we recognized the formula.

Native American fascist groups congratulate themselves that they have at last hit upon the necessary American scapegoat. It is to be the traditionally suspected "alien." Anything or anyone disliked by the self-appointed leaders, Reynolds and Coughlin, becomes automatically a "foreigner" or guilty of disseminating "foreign propaganda." Posing as the ward of true "Americanism," the native fascism now comes forward as the inspirer and organizer of the most intense campaign against the foreign-born in the United States since 1798.

Coughlin encourages this drive against the foreign-born, even though many among his own followers come under the interdiction. Coughlin encourages the drive primarily because it is a reactionary drive, and because, in Coughlin's language, "alien" seems to refer specifically to the Jewish people. Coughlin praises Reynolds as a "great nationalist" because Coughlinism today is bankrupt, and Coughlin runs frantically from group to group seeking support, followers, money. The Irish-born followers of Coughlin are deserting him -- and now Coughlin threatens them, by his support of Reynolds, with deportation!

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